

I'm writing to strongly oppose the FCC's new media consolidation proposal coming up for a vote by the commissioners on Monday. Former LA Times editor and USC Dean of the School of Journalism wrote a book in 1983 called the Media Monopoly, which warned of the dangers of the increasing control of public news and programming by fewer and fewer corporations. Twenty years later, his prediction has come true. Six major corporations now control most of the film production studios, radio stations, TV stations, newspapers, books publishers, and magazines in this country. As a democracy, we are seriously threatened by an increasing uniformity of information and perspectives on public media. This is not unlike the Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War, where a few consolidated news organizations - TASS, Pravda, and Izvestia held a monopoly on public information, which was nothing more than propaganda for the interests of the Soviet political elite.

I was recently appalled to find out that FCC employees had received free airline tickets from large telecommunications companies totaling almost \$2 million. I'm also concerned by the lack of transparency in conducting the vote on media consolidation this week. Why the secrecy? Why the lack of publicity? Why the antagonism to public participation? Are you supporting the interests of the American public, or the telecommunications giants? I strongly urge you to postpone this vote until this issue has been reviewed and debated. Just say no to media monopolies!